

From: ac
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 11:14pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Although I am a Canadian citizen, it is with great concern that I have watched this trial, the findings, and now the resolution.

It is a difficult problem, but it is clear that Microsoft will continue to exercise what it believes are its rights by violating the rights of other companies to compete in markets that Microsoft chooses to dominate.

The existing settlement is unacceptable, it does not serve the communities or the markets that Microsoft has impacted by their actions.

There are several possibilities, but any solution should benefit education, reinvigorate the technology markets to compete, and punish Microsoft by forcing a change in their business practices.

\$1 billion dollars is a paltry sum to Microsoft. At 5% interest they can earn that back in a year on the \$35 billion they would have left.

I would propose a \$10 billion fine. \$5 billion set up as an education fund to be administered by a neutral 3rd party, and \$5 billion to set up a fund to reinvigorate the technology market and give new companies the opportunity to compete in the market place.

I also believe that Microsoft should open source their browser, and if they bundle middleware (IE, Windows Media Player, MSN) competitors should have the same access to customers and rights to bundle as well. The difficulty is in trying to ensure that companies can compete on the OS platform in areas where Microsoft wants dominance. The only way to determine if any remedy is successful is to see if business can compete effectively and reach consumers fairly to compete for their business. Consumers have been summarily brainwashed to a large degree due to Microsoft's actions, they need to know that it doesn't have to be Microsoft if they don't want it.

Microsoft Office's file formats should be opened as well. Although they were not part of the case, this could be a key part of opening competition in markets where Microsoft has a stronghold. Office is a ubiquitous standard. There are no serious competitors because no other company is able to ensure compatibility with the Microsoft Office file format. This market has stagnated as well. There aren't many choices for consumers or businesses due to the file format issue. Opening the format up would create an even playing field. Companies could release their software and compete based on features and price.

Currently Apple is the only other choice that consumers have.

Microsoft's practices on Apple's platform are much different than their practises on their own platform. Its the control of the OS, control of the middleware, and control of standard file formats that are suffocating the industry. If Microsoft claims they want freedom to innovate, then level the playing field and let the consumers decide.

Thank you.